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REMINISCENCES OF THE TERRY RANGERS

J. K. P. BLACKBURN

I

When the Civil War commenced I was in school in Lavaca County, Texas, both as teacher and pupil, where I had been most of the time for four and a half years before. I was born in Tennessee in 1837 and in the fall of 1856, when I was about 19 years of age, my father emigrated to Texas with his family of wife and eight children. I taught a little primary school in Fayette County first for three months. Then I sold a horse my father gave me, got my money for teaching school, put these two funds together, and went to Alma Institute in Lavaca County for two years. I taught one year in Gonzales County, and after thus adding to my bank account, returned to my *alma mater* as pupil and assistant teacher and was there until hostilities commenced between the North and the South.

My first experience in anything that looked like warfare was had in a trip to San Antonio to help capture the Federal forces and war equipage at that place. The United States had been accustomed for years to make San Antonio an army post with a good force and plenty of army supplies under able commanders so as to be available to protect the western border from invasion. Soon after the State of Texas passed the ordinance of secession, Ben McCulloch, a frontiersman and Indian fighter, called upon the people living in the western and southern counties of Texas to meet him at the earliest possible moment at a rendezvous near San Antonio with any firearms to be had. Without delay nearly all the men able to bear arms and to do military duty, started with a rush, riding continuously without rest or sleep until we reached the place of gathering, which if my memory serves me, was on Sea Willow Creek a few miles from the city to the north. We who were from Lavaca County reached the place late in the night, probably two or three o'clock A. M. McCulloch had already sent men to surround the Alamo, then used as a fort and an arsenal for army and military supplies.

The movement was made with much caution and secrecy. Men

with rifles in hands were placed on top of the surrounding buildings so as to command the place the artillery men must occupy when they would attempt to fire the cannon. The headquarters of General Twiggs, one mile out in the country, were picketed by a file of armed men so as to prevent communication with his forces in town. When daylight came a flag of truce was sent in to the commander at the fort, a demand for surrender made, his attention called to men on the housetops and the forces now coming in to surround the fort and his army; and without firing a gun he surrendered everything he commanded.¹

In the meantime General Twiggs ordered his carriage and started for camp without seemingly knowing what had happened while he slept. Two of our men met him as he started out, presented their shot guns and told him he was their prisoner of war and so they marched him into the Grand Plaza where McCulloch and his men to the number of several hundred had assembled. I happened to be standing within a few steps of McCulloch when General Twiggs was brought in and I heard their conversation. After salutations General Twiggs said, "Ben McCulloch, you have treated me most shamefully, ruining my reputation as a military man and I am now too old to re-establish it." McCulloch answers, "I am serving my State, the State of Texas, Sir." General Twiggs replied, that if an old woman with a broomstick in hand had come to him and having authority from the State of Texas demanded his surrender he would have yielded without a word of protest. "But you, Sir, without papers, without any notice have assembled a mob and forced me to terms." So ends this episode. General Twiggs in his humiliation wept like a child and he had my sympathy and the sympathy I think of all who witnessed this meeting. The soldiers and arms and munitions of war captured—I cannot now recall numbers or amounts.²

I returned to school, but school work seemed tame and common-

¹February 16, 1861.

²In the whole department of Texas 2445 officers and men were surrendered by Twiggs. See report of Colonel C. A. Waite, U. S. Army, to Lorenzo Thomas, February 26, 1861, *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I, Vol. I, p. 524.

The value of the grounds, buildings and stores of all kinds surrendered in San Antonio was estimated at \$781,808.39; at the other posts in Texas, \$700,000. See report of the Texas Commissioners, Devine, Lockett, and Maverick, *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. LIII, p. 632.—C. W. R.

place and overshadowed by the tragic events on every side. War was declared by Lincoln on the seceded States, calling for troops from the other Southern States to help put down the rebellion. The Confederate Government had been formed at Montgomery, Alabama. A blaze of enthusiasm and resentment sweeping over the southland prompted patriots on every hand to get ready to defend their homes and firesides against the ravages and destruction of an insolent foe who was then moving to invade the South. The seceded States established drill and instruction camps in different parts of their borders, training men on every hand for effectual fighting. The camps were provided with competent drill masters, mobilization went on day after day through the spring and the early summer and on through the year, and regiments were formed and sent forward towards the seat of war until thousands upon thousands were mustered into service from every section that year, the year of 1861. I spent several weeks at Camp Clark on the San Marcos River, drilling and learning military tactics at that camp of instruction. All conversation on every side pertained to war and incidents and hopes and fears connected therewith. The question of, "Are you going to the war?" was rarely asked, but "Where will you go?"

I had a room-mate the last session in school named Foley, large hearted, intellectual and a poet, a Baptist preacher of ability, and a native of New York City. He and I discussed the question often and while we both preferred cavalry service, being good horsemen, he preferred to go west and northwest with the first regiment formed, I to go towards the east in order to be upon the main fields of battle even if I had to go with the infantry. We separated. He enlisted in Colonel Ford's Second Texas Cavalry and went to meet the enemy that was threatening Texas from the northwest. The next news I had from that Command, Foley had been killed in a charge on a battery at Valverde or Glorietta, New Mexico, (I have forgotten which)—killed by the last shot fired from that battery before its capture. Thus passed from earth one of the noblest spirits I ever knew.

I considered a proposition from Captain Fly who was raising a company in our neighborhood for the 2nd Texas infantry and at one time told him I thought I might join his company when they got ready to start, but told him of my preference for the cavalry.

Weeks passed. At last the opportunity came. A regiment of cavalry was to be raised in western and southern Texas for service in Virginia. Two Texans of wealth and leisure, B. F. Terry, a sugar planter, and Thos. S. Lubbock, a lawyer, who were traveling in the East—whether for business, pleasure, or curiosity, I know not—happened at or purposely were at the battle of first Manassas in Virginia, and rendered all the aid they could to the Southern cause. Terry acted as volunteer aid to the commanding general, and Lubbock also exposed his life in bearing messages during the contest. About the middle of August commissions came to Terry and Lubbock from the war department at Richmond, Virginia, authorizing them to raise a regiment on certain conditions, viz.: each man to furnish his own arms (double-barrelled shotgun and two six shooters), his bridle, blanket, saddle, spurs, lariat, etc., the Government to mount the men on good horses. The men should always select their own officers from colonel down to fourth corporal and serve in the Virginia army as an independent command. This was the opportunity that many had wished for and in less than twenty days this call was answered by 1170 men assembling at Houston to be enrolled in the regiment, afterwards called Terry's Texas Rangers. Colonel Terry immediately after securing the commission selected ten men in different sections and counties of the southern and western part of the State and asked them to raise a company of about a hundred men and bring them to Houston for enrollment in the army as soon as practical.

The company which I joined was made up from Fayette, Lavaca and Colorado counties, the majority being from Fayette. L. M. Strobel, having the authority, enrolled the names and set a day for meeting at Lagrange in Fayette County for organizing the company by electing officers from captain to corporal. At the called meeting Strobel was elected captain, W. R. Jarman first lieutenant, Phocian and William Tate (brothers) were elected second and third lieutenants, C. D. Barnett orderly sergeant, and J. T. J. Culpepper second sergeant. I cannot recall with any certainty the names of the other noncommissioned officers at this date. Our next meeting was called for Houston, Texas, where we were to be sworn in as soldiers of the Confederate States. Early in September the city of Houston was filled with volunteers anxious to enlist in the Terry Rangers. One thousand men were expected

to constitute the regiment, but more and more were enlisted until the number reached 1170, an average of 117 to each company, and others, I don't recall how many, were denied the privilege of enlistment.

A Lieutenant Sparks, who had belonged to the United States army if I mistake not, came authorized to administer the oath of allegiance to the Confederate States and enroll us as her soldiers. A little incident happened at the time which showed the feelings and determination of the men. They were lined up on three sides of a hollow square (as I now remember). The enrolling officer in the center asked this question, "Do you men wish to be sworn into service for twelve months or for three years or for during the war?" With a unanimity never surpassed, a shout unheard of before, that whole body of men shouted, "For the war," "For the war!" not one expecting or caring to return until the war was over, long or short, and the invaders had been driven from our borders.

And now the regiment is ready for service, as fine a body as ever mustered for warfare. The majority of them were college boys, and cowboys, professional men, men with finished education, men just out of college, others still under-graduates, men raised in the saddles, as it were, experts with lariat and with six shooters, and not a few from the farm, from the counting houses and from shops. Just why the regiment did not elect field officers and become a fully organized body of soldiers at Houston I never knew. In the absence of this organization, the companies not being numbered or lettered, each company was called by its captain's name. Ours was Captain Strobel's company, and was sent forward as the vanguard of the regiment toward the seat of war by Colonel Terry who assumed command although he refused to be called Colonel until he should be elected to the position by his men. The election took place in Kentucky in December following.

The company was put in box freight cars and started eastward over what was afterwards to be called the Sunset Route, which at that time ran east from Eagle Lake, Colorado County, Texas, through the city of Houston, to New Iberia, Louisiana.³ Our baggage and

³Mr. Blackburn's memory is slightly at fault here. The railroads ran from Alleyton on the Colorado, a few miles northwest of Eagle Lake, to Harrisburg, and from Houston to Beaumont, though the track of this latter road was laid to Orange. See *Atlas of Official Records*, Plate CLVII;

guns were put in the cars with us, each man retaining and wearing his pistols as regularly as his clothes. At New Iberia was a gap⁴ where the road had not been built reaching to Brashear City, Louisiana, about 100 miles. Over this gap we were supposed to walk and most of the company without a murmur commenced this march. The captain had hired wagons to transport the baggage and guns. A few men found horses they could hire for the trip and so we started with eight or ten men riding horseback and the balance on foot. The country was level, for the most part, the road was good, but innumerable lagoons or sloughs lay across this roadway from six inches to two feet deep and there was no way to cross them except to wade them. With this kind of experience, a half day found most of the men with blistered sore feet, and the further we went the more aggravated was their condition. So the captain, who was mounted, decided by the middle of the afternoon he would mount his men by impressing horses for the balance of the journey. That section was full of horses running in great herds on its prairies, so he and his mounted men found a herd of more than 100 head of all ages, sorts, and sizes, and penned them on or near the road while his baggage wagons were halted at little streams nearby. When the footmen reached the place they were told to look up their baggage, take their lariats, go to the pen and mount themselves, and the evening might be spent in breaking their horses and getting ready for the march next day.

The ages of the horses were from three to eight years, many of them had never been haltered before, some few were broken and gentle, and some of the older ones had been handled some but spoiled in attempting to break them and turned out on the range to go free. Of this last class I got one, an eight year old, Claybank gelding; but whatever their condition or habits, they were all

also A. M. Gentry to Secretary of War, Richmond, May 1, 1861, *Official Records*, Series IV, Vol. I, p. 1109.—C. W. R.

"This gap in the railroad ran from Orange through New Iberia to Brashear City. L. B. Giles, *Terry's Texas Rangers*, pp. 15-16, says: "From Houston to Beaumont, over a newly constructed railroad, it took nearly all day to make eighty miles. From Beaumont, by steamboat down the Neches and up the Sabine to Niblett's Bluff; thence a hundred miles on foot, through water much of the way; thence forty miles in carts. . . . At New Iberia, on Bayou Teche, we were transferred to boats, and went down between the beautiful banks of that stream to Brashear, now Morgan City."—C. W. R.

well broken by dark that night. Next morning one of my mess-mates, Patton by name, a school and classmate for several years, found his horse was loose and gone and could not be found anywhere near. The company was preparing to move. I went to the captain, explained the situation and asked permission to return to that pen and get another horse for Patton. He consented. Another one of my mess-mates told me he had been lucky enough to get a horse fairly well broken and gentle and that he would exchange with me until I went on that errand and returned. The company moved off and Patton was left at camp alone to await my coming with his horse. I rode back about six hundred yards to the pen where we had corraled the horses that evening. It was empty and I inquired at the house nearby of ladies—no men being at home—for the horses. They told me they had been turned out into a very large grass pasture nearby lying out south of the house. I went into that pasture and rode south from the residence; but concerning what happened for the balance of that day I am indebted to those good ladies for the information, for my mind suddenly became blank as to that matter and never since that time to this good day have I been able to recall anything that happened after I started out south from the house that day. About sunset I revived enough to realize that some one was sitting by me, pouring cold water on my head and I asked in surprise, "What do you mean by this treatment?" and "Where am I?" Patton answered, "You have been dead all day and I am trying this treatment to revive you." He then told me he had waited for me at the camp until he became uneasy at my failure to return and came up to this house hunting for me and found me there in an unconscious condition. Then the kind hearted ladies told me that I had early in the morning gone out into their pasture and had driven up a bunch of horses near the house, made a dash at them and had lassoed one of them and being unable to manage the animal I was riding, the lassoed animal made a quick circuit around me, jerked me off on the ground upon my head and that they had gone out there, dragged me to the house in an unconscious condition. They further stated the two horses thus lashed together by the lariat around the horn of my saddle on one and around the neck of the other ran off at a furious pace to overtake those gone on before, ran one on each side of the same tree, bringing on a collision resulting in

the death of the one and the fatal wounding of the other. The ladies had also brought my saddle, blanket and lariat to the house.

Now night had come on. Our company was a day's journey ahead of us and we two soldiers were left to shift for our transportation the best we could. We consulted about what was best to be done. Patton had learned the family possessed two carriage horses in their barn and we paid the ladies \$5.00 for their use to ride until we should overtake our company, pledging our honor as soon as we reached the camp to return them by their driver who was to accompany us. We saddled up and started at once, riding all night before we overtook the company. We sent back the horses with many thanks and journeyed from there to Brashear City, Patton and I in baggage wagons. At Brashear City we were all put on railroad trains again and soon after reached New Orleans, where we were quartered in a cotton compress building. Next day, aboard the cars on the Mississippi Central road we resumed our journey, without any incident of note until we reached Grand Junction, Tennessee, where we received a telegram from Colonel Terry ordering us to remain there awaiting further orders from him.

About two days later another message came announcing the fact that General Albert Sidney Johnston had interceded with the Secretary of War for our service—I mean the services of this Terry Ranger Regiment—and that we should take up our journey for Nashville, Tennessee, where General Johnston had arranged for our horses and munitions of war. This change of destination brought deep disappointment and displeasure to every one, as their hearts had been set on going to Virginia. General A. S. Johnston was a West Pointer, had served in the U. S. army both in the Mexican War and later on western frontier. He had a home and farm in Texas, and had resigned his position in the army when Texas seceded from the Union and accepted service in the Confederate army, and was at that time commanding the nucleus of what was afterwards the army of Tennessee, at Bowling Green, Kentucky. To Nashville we journeyed, and when we reached the city, encamped on the old fair grounds in West Nashville. Other companies of the regiment soon followed us and in a short time the whole regiment was encamped at Nashville.

The news of our coming and stories of the marvelous acts of

horsemanship of the cowboys had preceded us; and we proved to be a great attraction for the people of Nashville and surrounding country—so much so that crowds gathered in the mornings and greater crowds in the evenings every day while we were getting in our horses in that city. Every wild, unbroken, vicious horse in that section was brought in to be ridden. When one came in there was generally a rush made by the soldiers to get first chance at him. When he had been bridled and saddled one would mount him, pull off the bridle, turn him loose, put spurs to him, and bid him do his worst. Before he was half through with the performance another soldier would spring upon him as a hind-rider and after a time, depending upon the strength of the animal, he would come to a stand-still, completely exhausted and his riders were ready for the next act.

One attraction for the spectators was the ease with which the horsemen could ride in full gallop or fast run and pick up from the ground anything they wished to. To start this performance it would be announced from the stand or some prominent place that a number of silver dollars would be strewn along on the race track for anyone that would run at full speed and pick them up. This proposition would create much rivalry and interest among those who had gotten their mounts and a half dozen, sometimes more, would enter the contest, for by this time many had exhausted their pocket change. The money was placed by the spectators along the track at intervals of twenty paces or more apart in full view of the horsemen, and at a signal all started and generally every dollar was picked up the first dash made. Well, the spectators seemed to tire of the dollar proposition in a few days and reduced the offer to half dollars which was as readily accepted and gathered as the dollars. Later on another reduction to 25c was made and still later the ladies would bring in many bouquets to be given away in the same manner, but the rivalry and interest among the performers never ceased and thus was an entertainment given from day to day that brought many thousands of spectators during the regiment's sojourn at the Fair grounds.

During the month of November, I think, there broke out in camp a great epidemic of measles of a very violent form, which was no respecter of persons seemingly, for most of the members had it, some in milder form than others, but it seemed to touch every

one. To show how general it was in its attacks I quote from Henry Middlebrooks of our company. He said his mother had told him he had measles when a babe and he had measles when he was fifteen years old and he had them now so badly as to be rendered unfit for duty and was discharged from the service. Captain Strobel's company was first to lose a man from this epidemic, M. G. Harborough being the victim. The hospitals at Nashville and many private houses were filled with the sick and dying. I was sent to one of the hospitals where for weeks I was kept alive by the best of nursing and attention of the good ladies of Nashville who, in regular reliefs, nursed the sick night and day. God bless the good ladies of Nashville. They will always have a warm place in my heart, for my own mother could not have nursed me more carefully and constantly. The epidemic continued its fight upon the regiment until the middle of December, maybe a little longer. About that time I reported to the regiment for duty at a little village about fifteen miles north of Bowling Green, Kentucky, Oakland by name, where I joined about 150 men able for duty. Over 1000 men had been eliminated by measles; many of them died and others were discharged on account of disability and others still to return later on as they recovered. I can't recall numbers now, but I might safely say as many or perhaps more in our regiment died of this epidemic than were killed in battle in the four years the war continued.

An incident connected with the removal of the regiment from Nashville to Kentucky I feel should be mentioned at this time. Colonel Terry as a precaution against possible trouble had arranged for guards to be placed around the camp every night to prevent the men from going up town. The men, undisciplined as they were, looked upon this as an unnecessary restriction upon their general liberty, and so some of the most determined ones would manage to get out and go up every night and sometimes they would get unruly or noisy from drink and fall into the hands of the police and be locked up; but generally they were released after short detention and a promise of good behavior in the future. In this way there was some bad blood between the "cops" and the Texans, which soon brought on a crisis and bloodshed and death to some of the police force. One night three or four soldiers slipped by the guards, went up town, imbibed too freely of booze, went to the

theater and took their seats in the gallery. Captain John Smith's expected execution and Pocahontas' rescue as related in early history of the Colonies was the drama staged for the night. When that part of the play was reached where Captain John Smith, condemned to die by his Indian captors, was bound hand and foot and his head placed upon a rock, the executioner drew back his bludgeon to strike the fatal blow, Pocahontas thrust her own body between Smith's head and the descending bludgeon, one of the boozy soldiers in the gallery whipped out a six-shooter and fired upon the supposed executioner with the remark that "his mother had taught him to always protect a lady when in danger." This shot missed its mark, but created consternation and stopped the play. The police rushed in to arrest the offender, the other soldiers helped him to resist arrest, and shooting began, resulting in the death of two policemen and the wounding of another one and the freedom of the soldiers to return unmolested to camp. This tragedy was reported to the Governor of Tennessee and immediately telegraphed by the Governor to General Johnston, who ordered Colonel Terry to come immediately on the first train to Bowling Green and report to him. By daylight next morning the regiment was in the train on their way to their destination, nearer to the scenes that should soon be enacted between contending lines of battle. The baggage and the horses collected for the use of the regiment up to this time were sent on through the country by a detail of men with an officer in charge.

When Colonel Terry reported to General Johnston's headquarters, at Bowling Green, he was ordered to assemble his regiment at Oakland, fifteen miles north of Bowling Green. About the first business attended to in the new quarters was to hold an election for regimental officers and to cast lots for assignment of companies to their places in the regiment. This resulted in the election of B. F. Terry for Colonel, Thos. S. Lubbock for Lieutenant-Colonel, and Thos. Harrison for Major. Martin Royston was selected as Adjutant and W. B. Sayers as Sergeant Major. Captain Strobel's company, to which I belonged, drew the letter F for its number of place in the regiment. The other companies drew other letters of the alphabet, from A to K inclusive, except J, and thereafter the companies were called and known by letters instead of by captains' names. The organization now being complete, a roster was made

out and sent to the Secretary of War at Richmond, Virginia, and an application made for numbering the regiment, and for commissions for all commissioned officers of the same. The number assigned us was 8th Texas Cavalry, when we would have been 2nd Texas Cavalry but for the two or three months interval between our enrollment and our final organization. The first duty assigned us was to patrol and picket all that section from Bowling Green north as far up as Woodsonville on Green River, Kentucky.

The winter came on with much snow and hard freezing weather. The men were coming in slowly from their sick beds. Those already in camps had to do double duty, owing to their small numbers and the great amount of the work to be done. It was not uncommon for men to be compelled to stand picket in the snow several inches deep for four hours at a time and then be relieved for two hours and be put in again for four hours. This duty was very trying on the constitutions of those just recovering from an attack of measles. This unusual experience brought bronchial troubles or affections upon me, and although it did not send me to the hospital again, yet I have never up to this day gotten entirely rid of it.

On the 17th day of December the regiment made a reconnaissance up near Woodsonville, Kentucky. The turnpike ran parallel with the railroad for some distance before we reached the village. Colonel Terry sent two companies up the railroad and the balance of the regiment kept the pike. On near approach to the village on Green River, the two companies came suddenly upon about an equal number of the enemy who were concealed behind some haystacks and a fence near the railroad, who saluted the Texans with a volley of musketry which told heavily upon them, but the Texans charged them on horseback and drove them back toward the village. In the meantime the balance of the regiment had come up on a rise or deviation in the pike in view of the conflict, several hundred yards from us to our right. We were halted there for a little while and sitting on our horses in column of twos when suddenly without the least suspicion of what was about to happen, a heavy volley of musketry was turned upon us from a black jack thicket on the hillside east of us and very close to us. Colonel Terry immediately ordered a charge, emphasizing the order with an oath not easily forgotten, so we made a rush for those bushes concealing a considerable force with bayonets fixed ready to receive us. With

our shotguns loaded with buckshot we killed, wounded, and scattered that command in short order. Our casualties were comparatively few in numbers, but fearful in results, as we lost our Colonel, shot through the jaw, the bullet ranging up through the brain. He and his horse and three of the enemy fell in a heap. He had shot two and a ranger near him, I think, shot the third one.

This was the 32nd Indiana Regiment of Infantry we fought, commanded by Colonel Willich so we were informed by the prisoners we captured. This was our first battle and the first engagement of the army of Tennessee. We had ridden into an ambuscade and if the enemy had lowered their fire sufficiently in that first volley, there is no good reason why we would not all have been killed or wounded. One lesson we learned from that experience that served us well in future operations. That was to have flankers out on each side of a moving column as well as a vanguard whenever we might suspect an enemy, so as to avoid ambuscades.

In the engagement at Woodsonville Captain Walker of Company K was wounded by a bayonet passing through his lower arm and slightly wounding him in the chest. What the losses were on each side, I cannot now recall.⁵

When Colonel Terry was killed, Lieutenant Colonel Lubbock was dangerously sick and died in a short time afterwards, so under our "bill of rights" as we believed, we held another election for Colonel and Lieutenant Colonel and to fill some vacancies in line officers where they had resigned and gone home. At this election we chose Captain Wharton of Company B for Colonel, Captain Walker of Company K for Lieutenant Colonel and in Company F, B. E. Joiner Third Lieutenant instead of Wm. Tate, resigned. We continued our scouting, picketing, and patrolling in that section of Kentucky through that severe winter 1861 until February, 1862. In the meantime we received boxes of heavy clothing from our home folks in Texas which was badly needed and duly appreciated, for ours was thread-bare and too light for the cold weather.

Some time in January, I think, Confederate General Zolicoffer was killed at Fishing Creek and his army defeated, and in February, Fort Donelson on Cumberland River, after two days fighting sur-

⁵Colonel Willich reported the loss of 11 officers and men killed, 22 wounded, 5 missing; Brigadier General Hindman, commanding the Confederates, reported 4 killed and 10 wounded. See *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. VII, pp. 16-20.—C. W. R.

rendered to General Grant. These heavy losses caused General Johnston to give up Kentucky and move into Tennessee and select later the Memphis and Charleston railroad as a base of operations.

When the army reached Nashville, our regiment was sent down the river to, or near to, Fort Donelson to gather up some teams and army supplies that had been rushed out there before the surrender of the Fort, while the main body of the Confederates assembled at Murfreesboro, where we rejoined them after bringing those things we had been sent for. After a few days General Johnston moved his infantry and artillery southward to reach his new selected base at Corinth, Mississippi, leaving the cavalry at Murfreesboro to watch the enemies' movements and to impede as much as we might their progress south if an attempt was made to follow in pursuit. In a few days only our regiment and a few squads of other cavalry were to be seen about the city. Among the odds and ends of cavalry men was Captain John H. Morgan, afterwards General Morgan, with a few recruits trying to raise a cavalry command for the Confederate service, and at the same time paying most assiduous attentions to Miss Ready, daughter of Colonel Ready of Murfreesboro.

One night Captain Morgan asked Colonel Wharton for a detail of two men to go with him next day on a raid within the enemy's lines up toward Nashville, telling Colonel Wharton he already had seven men armed and well mounted, and he wished him to furnish him two more good men well mounted with blue overcoats, shot-guns and pistols, which would make ten by counting himself. Colonel Wharton sent the order to Company F to make the detail wanted. Jake Flewellen and I were ordered to report to Captain Morgan next morning at sun-up, mounted and ready for the trip. Sunrise came; Captain Morgan and nine private soldiers moved out on the Nashville pike, mounted and equipped for the trip according to instructions, except I had on a black overcoat. I had no blue one and didn't want one and never did wear one. Morgan assigned me to the rear, thinking and judging correctly too that the squad would be judged by those in front and not by one man in the rear. The enemy had moved their army out on Murfreesboro pike, ten or fifteen miles, and gone into winter quarters, and were making preparations for a movement south when spring should come. We kept the turnpike road for several miles and as we approached

the neighborhood of their encampments we turned to the right and moved through fields and woodland, sometimes, in full view of their encampments and I thought uncomfortably near them. But the blue coats of the squad kept down any suspicion as to our identity and we kept our course until we were something like five miles from the city when we approached the pike again, where a thicket of undergrowth was near to the pike. We stood parallel to the highway in a line of battle for a short time, when a wagon train from Nashville loaded with provisions and supplies for the army drove up, guarded by a troop of cavalry, about sixteen I think. Armed with sabres, with guns and pistols pointed at them and a fence between us, they surrendered readily and the guard and teams and drivers all fell into our hands without firing a gun. As soon as the wagons could be fired and the teams and guards could be collected for the march, Captain Morgan ordered me and three or four others, including my fellow soldier Fleweller to take charge of them and get out of the enemy's lines as quickly as possible and not to halt for anything until we crossed Stone River, near Murfreesboro, where we should encamp and wait his return. Our trip being without incident we reached our camping place about sundown. On the eastern bank of the stream was a large commodious dwelling with a small family in it and servants in the kitchen or cabins and plenty of provender in the barn. We put our prisoners in one of the large rooms and a guard over them and a vidette on or near the river bank; had the servants to feed all the horses at the barn and by alternating in guard and picket duty passed a quiet night.

Next morning before sunrise the vidette reported ten or twelve men advancing towards us from the other side of the river. We supposed them to be Yankees, as the enemy was generally termed by us, but as they drew nearer there were no guns in sight and we decided with much relief that it was Captain Morgan and his men with ten prisoners of war they had captured and kept in the woods all night awaiting daylight so they could see their way to travel better. Captain Morgan, when he reached us related the events of the previous day after we had left him. He said they captured about sixty prisoners and had ordered four men to take them and follow us to Stone River and camp as he had ordered us, and that the enemy's cavalry which had gotten wind of his presence in their

lines were looking for him, coming upon this second lot of prisoners, recaptured them and slew three of his men after they had surrendered, one of them making his escape. He further told us that he and his companion had visited a picket post and he, pretending to be officer of the day whose duty required him to look after the guards and pickets of the army, had called to the commander of the post to come out of a house in which he was quartered and as he approached him Morgan placed a pistol to his breast and told him he was his prisoner and for him to make no sign or outcry to his fellows in the house on penalty of death, but to call them out by name, one by one, until all were captured without realizing what had happened. Then his companion was sent out to the picket post a short distance away and brought in the two videttes who were on vidette post, and being late in the evening, the enemy scouting on all sides looking for them, they hid themselves, sat up all night guarding their prisoners and very early in the morning had traveled on until they reached us and now without further delay everything was made ready for the further march into Murfreesboro, that about one mile distant.

We marched up the street in front of Colonel Ready's house, lined up prisoners, horses and spoils and guards across the street while Captain Morgan went in the house and invited his sweetheart and the balance of the family at home to come out on the veranda and see the fruit of his exploit. Flewellen and I were then relieved with thanks and we returned to our company, leaving the prisoners and spoils in the hands of Morgan and his three men he still had with him. Next day one of Morgan's men hunted me up and told me Captain Morgan wanted to see me at his office, so I went with him to the office. The captain greeted me most cordially and said he wanted to thank me over again for the valuable service I had rendered during the scout the day or two before. I told him I did the best I could with the matter I had in hand and did not deserve any special thanks more than others with me. But he seemed to look at the matter differently and said he wished to give me something to be kept as a souvenir of that hazardous venture. He then told me to select a sabre, the best of the captured lot he had and take it with me as a keepsake of the occasion. I did so and took the newest and brightest in the lot and went

back to my company with it, and while we served in the same army I don't think now I ever saw him again.

Morgan was captain then, but soon his efficiency as a cavalry officer and raider was conceded on all sides and his promotion was rapid. He made many raids into the enemy's lines, even going one time into Ohio. Men flocked to his standard from Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, and other sections. He became Brigadier and later Major-General, I think. He married Miss Ready; was finally killed in Greenville, East Tennessee, in one of his raids in that section. While I prized my sabre as a souvenir, I soon found it was an inconvenience to carry with my other equipments. I had a double barrellled shotgun, two six shooters, my blanket, oil cloth, clothing, haversack, etc., to carry and I could at once see that while it might prove a nice keepsake I had no other use for it. Later on I had a chance to leave it with a relative in middle Tennessee to be kept for me until the war was over or until I should call for it, and in this way it passed the war period; after the close of hostilities I went to see my kinsman (who had died in the meantime) and recovered my sabre from his family who had taken good care of it. It now hangs in the hall of my daughter's home in Grand Rapids, Michigan, 563 Union Ave., S. E. It is her keepsake now, to be disposed of by her as she may desire.

Some time in March, 1862, we, the cavalry forces at Murfreesboro, broke camp and started to follow the army of Tennessee to Corinth, Mississippi, where it was being prepared to act on the defensive against the oncoming armies of General Grant and General Buell. Grant's army was at Pittsburg Landing and encamped out some distance from the landing on the Tennessee River in the direction of Corinth, near Shiloh church, while General Buell was moving his army from Nashville to the same point by forced marches to unite with Grant in his attack on General Johnston, now at Corinth, about fifteen miles south of Pittsburg Landing. Johnston's army consisted of about 40,000 or 45,000 men—my recollection Grant's nearly the same—and Buell's probably 50,000. Johnston decided to attack Grant's army before Buell could reach him and taking one at a time, defeat them both, and I have no doubt his plan would have succeeded had General Johnston lived a few days more. After hastily collecting his forces

he moved out of Corinth, on the evening of the fifth⁶ of April and next morning before light attacked the enemy in the encampments. The attack was unexpected and furious from the beginning. The enemy was driven slowly back towards the river all day long, making a most stubborn resistance, but gradually they gave up their encampments and artillery and equipments until four o'clock that afternoon when the Confederates were unwisely halted by an order from General Beauregard who succeeded to chief command after General Johnston's fatal wound about three o'clock that afternoon. This closed the first day's engagement with the whole battlefield, including many arms, wagons, sutlers stores, etc., etc., in the hands of the Confederates.

We slept on the battleground that night as best we could with torrents of rain pouring down on us all night and with the gunboats on the river firing over us all night to disturb our slumbers. Many of the boys visited the sutlers stores that night and helped themselves to the edibles and as much clothing as they could use or carry off. Next morning early the Federals having been reinforced by Buell's army, made an attack on us by moving forward against our left, with what was said to be eleven lines of battle, and beat our left wing back some distance and then a movement along all of our front beat back all of our line slowly but surely all day long until night closed the fight with Federals in charge of all their encampments given up the previous day. Thus ended two days of the most terrible fighting I ever witnessed before or since. Never did I at any other time hear minie balls seem to fill the air so completely as on this second day's fight. But the battle was not ended yet, for on the third day, the eighth of April, in the evening was an engagement between the Confederate cavalry and Federal infantry that ought always to be mentioned as the last act of this tragic event where losses on both sides amounted to more than 20,000 men.⁷

I will now recur to the regiment and company to which I belonged, in order to record their part in this bloody contest and to give some of the incidents of more or less interest that occurred

⁶Johnston's army left Corinth on the morning of April 3 and arrived in the vicinity of Shiloh late in the afternoon of the 5th.—C. W. R.

⁷The losses as officially reported were: Confederates, 10,699; Unionists, 13,047.—C. W. R.

at that time.* When the battle commenced on the 6th of April our bugler sounded the assembly which brought us quickly into line. The several companies were numbered to ascertain our effective force at the beginning. Company F numbered 65 men in line, including non-commissioned officers, a captain and second lieutenant. This lieutenant had been elected by the company principally because he had slain two different men in personal combat, and was therefore regarded as a hero of heroes. While the company was being numbered, the musketry one-half mile away was heavy and almost continuous and this officer riding up and down in front of the company remarked time and time again, "Ah, boys, that is music to my ears," making us believe he would perform many deeds of valor when he reached the firing line. At last an order came for us to march to the front and when near there we were ordered to form columns of fours, move to rear of the enemy and make an attack from that quarter; but failing to get far enough back to take them in the rear we marched the head of the column right into the flank of the enemy's line, who, concealed from our view, were lying down behind some timber recently felled by a storm. Being at right angles with our line of march, they could concentrate the fire of their whole line to enfilade our column from end to end; and as the head of the column neared them they rose suddenly, poured a volley into us which reached every company in the line of march, killing and wounding men and horses clear back to the rear of column. Of course nothing could be done but fall back and reform for further action in a different move; but I must stop to tell you about this officer to whose ears the battle at a distance was so musical. Though not touched by bullets he became suddenly sick at the sight of bloodshed and had to be sent to the rear to avoid a nervous collapse. It was his first and his last experience in battle for he resigned and returned to Texas and we never saw him again. This lesson is that "the true test of valor comes, not in use of words, but only in action in the crucible of battle."

The regiment was dismounted and made an attack on the enemy on the left flank of our army and then moved to the rear of our army for a support to other troops in firing line, and so fighting and maneuvering was kept up until four o'clock in the afternoon

*Colonel Wharton's report of the battle is to be found in *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 626.—C. W. R.

when all the reserves were ordered to the firing line for a final rush to be made as we all thought to drive the panic-stricken army of General Grant into Tennessee River. We formed the line, and awaited the order to move forward. In the meantime the enemy immediately on our front left their line in some haste and disappeared from view over the crest of the hill near the river. While we waited with much impatience for orders to move there came an order from General Beauregard telling that the battle was ended for the day and we had captured General Prentiss with four thousand of his men and a great victory was ours. When the order was read instead of creating enthusiasm amongst the men it created indignation and disgust because it was apparent to all in the firing line that the hard earned victory that had cost so much blood and so many lives was to be thrown away for the want of one more charge which as we thought then and think now would have resulted in a complete overthrow or capture of General Grant's army and the downfall of General Grant himself as a military leader. But why was the Southern army halted at this critical period? General Beauregard's excuse was it was late in the day, the men were tired and needed rest; but the truth as I saw it is the sun was still between three and four hours high and the men were anxious for this last charge to the river, which was not more than one-half mile away, I think. The men talked among themselves of the importance of the movement and their willingness to make it at the time and after events prove but too well the men were right and the commander wrong in issuing the order to halt.

I want to make a little digression from the main story to pay my respects to some erroneous history in regard to this crisis in that battle. Nelson's *Encyclopedia* and the *History of the Mississippi Valley* by Prof. Johnson,⁹ Ph. D. and LL. D. of the Agricultural College of Minnesota, I think, both agree substantially in the statement that a hastily constructed battery on the hill near the river and the firing of the gunboats from the river stopped the Confederate's advance. While I am still upon the earth I want to testify as eye-witness at close range, that the aforesaid

⁹Possibly Mr. Blackburn has in mind Rossiter Johnson's *History of the War of Secession*, on his *Fight for the Republic*, in each of which a statement of the kind alluded to is made. The name he gives is evidently incorrect.—C. W. R.

battery and the gunboat's shelling had no more to do with stopping the forward movement that day than the flowing of the ocean tides or the changes of the moon had to do with it, for nearly an hour had passed since we halted before the battery was placed and before the gunboats fired the first shot and the men had scattered from their commands looking for something to eat. So I enter my protest here and now against the careless and unauthorized way these two authors record history.

But to return to my story. There was a man, Charles Howard by name, strong physically and mentally, brave as Julius Caesar and well educated, but with the way and manners of a frontiersman, with many peculiarities. He had belonged to Company F but got a transfer to Company C for some reason I don't recall. He had gotten a nice laundered white shirt from the sutler's store the night of the 6th of April. Next morning, the 7th, as the regiment was formed to move, some one reproved Howard for tucking his shirt back at the neck, exposing his breast which was one of his habits, telling him it was a shame to treat a nice shirt in that way. His reply was, "If I get shot in the breast today I don't want the bullet to injure my biled shirt." Pretty soon we were ordered to move out towards the enemy and ascertain their position, their probable number, etc., and report back to the commanding general. Our movement, which was only intended for a reconnaissance, drew the fire of the enemy's pickets, for advance in their forward movement had already begun, and one ball struck Howard in the breast a little below the collar bone, going through him and lodging in the muscles or shoulder blade in the back part of his shoulder, not touching his laundered shirt. A little later while we stood in column still headed towards the enemy Howard came riding along the column singing "Blue-eyed Mary," a favorite song of his. As he neared me I said, "Which way, Charles, with your 'Blue-eyed Mary' this morning?" He replied, "To Texas, don't you see my furlough?" pointing to the wound in his breast. He rode horseback to Corinth that day, about fifteen miles, applied for and obtained a furlough soon after, went to Texas and about five months later reported back to his company for duty again, sound as a dollar.

Our next move was to the rear a short distance to dismount and join in with a Louisiana brigade of infantry to make a charge on

the enemy. Our movement was down a gentle slope to the bottom of a hill. The enemy came down the slope on the other side towards us. The whole face of the earth at that place and time appeared to be blue and their many lines of battle firing over each others head made a storm of lead that no single line of battle could resist and so after a short time the line was so weakened by losses as to compel the retirement of the remainder. But I want to relate an incident of the battle that impressed me as being out of the ordinary. John P. Humphries, a member of Company F, a brave good soldier carried the largest shotgun I ever saw and always loaded it with about 20 buckshot to each barrel. He had a most peculiar laugh, unlike any laugh I ever heard. As we made that charge that morning there was a small oak tree near the bottom of the hill where the line made a stand. It was right in my front so I got behind the tree thinking it might save my hide somewhat. I had scarcely reached it before Humphries came up behind me. He saw the tree was too small for two to stand behind in safety, so he moved a few steps to the left and got behind another tree about the same size. A little while after I heard Humphries laugh and looked towards him to see what had happened. A minie ball had pierced his hat close to his scalp and knocked it from his head. He grabbed it up, pulled it down hard on his head with both hands and laughed his peculiar laugh again. It occurred to me, and I mentally said, "If you can laugh at that, you will laugh at death when he comes." This repulse was the first experienced in the battle of Shiloh. After this the battle raged pretty well all day over lines resisting with great stubbornness; but by night the enemy occupied their foremost encampments, and our army retreated that night carrying all the army supplies with them as far as was possible to do.

Next day, April 8th, the cavalry were employed in patrolling the space now behind the army and as rear guard we protected as best we could the retreat of our army to Corinth from any possible attack that might be made by the enemy's cavalry or any other arm of service that might pursue it. About four o'clock in the afternoon the enemy's infantry in force kept moving up towards us until we realized we would have to check them by some means to keep them from overtaking the rear of our army. A short distance ahead of us Major Harrison, now commanding the regi-

ment, sent me to General Breckenridge's headquarters who was commanding the rear of the retreating army to tell him of the near approach of a large body of the enemy and to ask him for aid or orders. General Breckenridge's reply was, "Give Major Harrison my compliments and tell him to hold the enemy back awhile for I can't move from here yet." I rode back, delivered the message, and found the enemy had approached to within 250 or 300 yards of our position; had formed two lines of battle and had thrown out skirmishers who were making it lively for our boys who were then standing in line on horseback. At this juncture Colonel Forrest came up to us with about an equal number of horsemen to our own, placed them on the right of our line, and being senior officer took charge of the whole line, about two hundred or more in all. He immediately decided to charge so Major Harrison rode up in front of our line, telling us to prepare for the charge, and added, "Boys, go in twenty steps of the Yankees before you turn your shotguns loose on them."

Forrest ordered forward. Without waiting to be formal in the matter, the Texans went like a cyclone, not waiting for Forrest to give his other orders to trot, gallop, charge, as he had drilled his men. By the time the Yankee skirmishers could run to their places in ranks and both lines got their bayonets ready to lift us fellows off our horses, we were halted in twenty steps of their two lines of savage bayonets, their front line kneeling with butts of guns on the ground, the bayonets standing out at right angle or straighter and the rear lines with their bayonets extended between the heads of the men of the first line. In a twinkling of an eye almost, both barrels of every shotgun in our line loaded with fifteen to twenty buckshot in each barrel was turned into that blue line and lo! what destruction and confusion followed. It reminded me then of large covey of quail bunched on the ground, shot into with a load of bird shot: their squirming and fluttering around on the ground would fairly represent that scene in that blue line of soldiers on that occasion. Every man nearly who was not hurt or killed broke to the rear, most of them leaving their guns where the line went down, and made a fine record in getting back to their reserve force several hundred yards in their rear. After the shotguns were fired, the guns were slung on the horns of our saddles and with our six shooters in hand we pursued those fleeing, either captur-

or killing until they reached their reserved force. Just before they reached this force, we quietly withdrew; every man seemed to act upon his own judgment for I heard no orders. But we were all generals and colonels enough to know that when the fleeing enemy should uncover us so their line could fire on us, we would have been swept from the face of the earth.

Some observations might be appropriately made at this time concerning the engagement.¹⁰ It was the last fight of the battle of Shiloh. The enemy turned back from there and we had that section to ourselves. Forrest and his command never fired a gun in that battle for the reason that his military maneuvers as then practiced did not allow his men to get there until the fight was over. Notwithstanding this fact a Memphis paper a day or two afterwards gave out the statement that Colonel Forrest with a few Texans on April the 8th had charged the enemy in force and completely vanquished them. After Forrest gave the order to forward we never saw him any more until we were brigaded over at Chattanooga and put under him for service. We were told that when we made that cyclone movement towards the enemy Colonel Forrest turned to his men to urge them forward faster and was struck in the back by one of the enemy's bullets fired at us as we went at them, and had to be taken off the field.¹¹

I have been asked by some persons inexperienced as to warfare why the Yankees did not shoot us all off our horses when halted so close in their front. Of course they had no loads in guns to shoot us with and we knew it for as we approached them both lines of battle had fired at us and they had had no time to reload.

There was only one Texan wounded in that fight, Lieutenant Story of Company C, and there is a good reason for that; for the enemy fired when we were crossing a low place in the ground about fifteen yards away and most of their balls went over our heads. One of them struck and mortally wounded Lieutenant Story and one ball took a fur cap off my head leaving, as my comrades afterwards told me, a small powder marked line across my left temple. One or two more incidents of this battle and I will pass on.

¹⁰The official report by Major Harrison is in *Official Records, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 923.*

¹¹For a somewhat different version, see Wyeth, J. A., *Life of N. B. Forrest*, 78-81. or Jordan, Thos., *Campaigns of Forrest and Forrest's Cavalry*, 146-148.—C. W. R.

In our pursuit of the flying enemy, as I rushed by a stump of a tree, ten feet high and two feet in diameter, looking at a Yankee running in my front a little distance I became suddenly aware of a bayonet near my body in the hands of a red faced Dutchman, and I could not tell whether he made a thrust at me and missed me or whether he intended to use it on me if I bothered him. I turned upon him, fully intending to kill him, but when I leveled my pistol at him, he dropped his bayoneted gun upon the ground and with the greatest terror depicted in his face, said, "I surrender." In an instant I forgave him and let him live. I think surrender was the only English word he could speak, neither could he understand a word I said. I said, "Take that gun up and break it against the stump" and when I found he didn't know what to do and stood trembling I pointed to the gun and made signs to take hold of it and motions to strike. I got him to understand me, he broke the breech off and I motioned him to our rear and he went off at a lively gait.

I had a messmate by the name of Ed Kaylor, a good soldier, never showing any fear about him. In this battle he came upon a captain who had vainly tried to rally his men as they ran to the rear. When he found he could not get them to stop and help him he concluded he would sell out as best he could so he fired on Kaylor as he rode towards him. They exchanged three shots each; Kaylor slowly advancing upon him. When Kaylor closed in upon him he threw up his hands and offered to surrender, but Kaylor, in language not suitable for parlor topics of conversation said, "Oh H—ll you are too late" and fired another shot, killing him instantly. An eye-witness to this pistol duel said Kaylor had a broad smile on his face during this gun play. When I heard of the incident I said to Kaylor, "Ed, what did you see in that game that caused you to smile so sweetly at that Yankee?" He said he was not conscious of having smiled, but he surely did enjoy that scrap immensely. Poor Kaylor afterwards was killed in East Tennessee while serving under Longstreet, during the siege of Knoxville, as related by a Texan companion with him at the time, as follows: Kaylor and a companion having lost their horses (in battle or otherwise) were ordered to mount themselves again by taking horses wherever they could find them back in the mountains, for the most part of that section was disloyal to the Confederacy

anyway. As they searched the mountain section for horses they heard that there was to be a dance given to the Yankee officers near where was one of their encampments, so they concluded to attend that dance, and mount themselves while the Yankees danced. But after reaching the place they concluded to go in the house, get the riders and take them and their horses both back with them, so they entered the room during the dancing with pistols in hands and demanded surrender of all the men who were in the room, all armed with pistols belted around them. For a time all seemed to go as they wished until some one cried out, "There are only two of these rebels." Then ensued a scuffle for their pistols already in Kaylor's hands and Kaylor began to shoot and several fell from his unerring aim, until some one regained his pistol, shot him and he fell dead among several he had already slain. His companion escaped and lived to tell of his taking off as here related.

But to return to the main story, the Battle of Shiloh was finished. The losses were enormous as already related. Of the sixty-five men and two officers that answered roll call on the morning of the 6th of April of Company F, only fourteen men and the captain answered roll call on the morning of the 8th of April and I was acting orderly sergeant. Now this should not be construed to mean that the other fifty men had been killed or wounded, but it does mean that those not killed or wounded were absent from roll call, most of them off on some kind of duty, such as picketing, scouting, helping the retreating army in whatever way duty assigned them.

The Confederate army collected at Corinth, and the Federal army at Pittsburg Landing, each army where it had encamped before the battle, and each one to plan its future operations was left unmolested for a time. Our regiment was ordered back to Tennessee going through lower middle Tennessee on to Chattanooga. We camped one or two nights at Rienzi, Mississippi, on our way. Awaiting final instructions as to our future movements, news came to us that General Price had reached Corinth with his army of Missourians and Texans. As I had a brother with this command in Whitfield's Legion of Texans I decided to make him a visit before we left Mississippi. It was about twenty miles I think back to Corinth, so getting some papers fixed up by my comrades as a pass to keep me from being arrested as a deserter, I

went back to Corinth as my command went eastward on their journey towards Tennessee. My papers were not genuine.

I found my brother sick from exposure during the winter campaign under Price in Missouri. I stayed with him all night and next morning moved out early to overtake my command which was by this time twenty miles and two days journey ahead of me. I rode all day and a part of the night to overtake them. They had captured a small scouting party of Yankees the night or day before I reached them.

Next morning a detail was called for from Company F to take the prisoners back to Corinth, and I was called on to be one of the guards; so back to Corinth I journeyed again, and after delivering the prisoners to General Beauregard's headquarters the following night, and resting a few hours, set out to overtake the command which was moving eastward. After about two days more I was again with the command. But now my faithful steed which I had ridden constantly since the middle of December the year before gave out entirely, worn out by constant usage and had to be left on the wayside, and I had to join the wagon train and to be snubbed as a "wagon dog" by my comrades, a common appellation given to every one who went with the wagons, regardless of the conditions making it necessary for him to be there.

The command went through middle Tennessee and had a fight or heavy skirmish with the Yankees at Sulphur Trestle in Giles County. I do not recall any results of that fight as reported to us except Captain Harris of Company I lost his life there. Arriving at Chattanooga a brigade was organized by putting Forrest's regiment, our regiment, and two Georgia regiments, three and four, I think, together, and Colonel Forrest took charge of it for service in middle Tennessee and wherever we might be needed.

At that time elections were held in different companies to select commissioned officers where there were vacancies caused by resignations or otherwise. Company F elected two lieutenants, 1st and 2nd, J. K. P. Blackburn 1st, and A. J. Murray 2nd. While we were entitled to commissions issued by the Secretary of War, we never applied for them and never received them. In fact, I don't remember of ever having seen a commission from the government for any officer in the command. The men of the different companies knew whom they had selected and, whether they held commissions

or whether they wore insignia of office or not, they always felt that they must obey the men they had elected over them. Hardly a star or bar was to be seen in the command, except in dress parade when the Colonel might show his rank on a dress coat that he kept for the purpose.

Our next encounter with the enemy was in Warren County, Tennessee, near Morrison's depot where the enemy had constructed a stockade and left about three companies of infantry to protect a railroad bridge across the river from destruction by the Confederates. The stockade was built of logs twelve or fifteen inches in diameter and twelve feet long, set on end in trenches two feet deep, close touching each other with portholes cut between the logs about as high as a man's head, to shoot through. These logs were thoroughly tamped in place and a small door left in one side for passing in and out with a screen of like make just on the inside so one going in would pass in the door and turn to left or right to get inside of the stockade. I have been thus particular in describing this fort or stockade so the reader may more easily understand why we were so easily and completely defeated by this small contingent of defenders when we attacked that fort. When within one-quarter or one-half mile of the place Colonel Forrest formed the brigade into single line, ordered us to dismount and then rode in front of each regiment giving instructions about the charge he intended to make. When in front of our regiment he said, "I don't want but one-half of this command for this engagement"—that his scouts reported that only three or four companies were up there and that they had their dinner already cooked, and he wanted us to kill them and then eat their dinner. Company F had thirty men in line, so the first fifteen were ordered to step two paces to the front, and the captain told me to take charge of them, so we maneuvered for some time to get a suitable place to charge from, but could not get nearer than two hundred or two hundred and fifty yards without being exposed to full view of the enemy from the start to the finish, so we were ordered to charge at least two hundred yards through an open field upon that fort. Of course the enemy were inside and had nothing to do but shoot us down from the start. After approaching near enough for some of our men to make telling shots at those portholes we were driven back in much disorder to the timber, back of the field from whence

we started. Our loss was estimated at 180 killed and wounded. Company F's loss was one killed and five wounded. The enemy's loss was 20 killed whom we shot in the head through those port-holes. James Petty of my company was killed within ten feet of the door of that stockade. These details of the enemy's dead and the place where Petty fell we have learned from our surgeon who was left to care for the wounded at that place.

Our next move was to capture about 2000 soldiers commanded by General Crittenden at Murfreesboro, Tennessee. We started from the neighborhood of McMinnville, Tennessee, one evening in the summer—I don't remember the date¹²—rode until about eight o'clock, stopped, watered and fed our horses, mounted again and rode until nearly daylight to reach our destination. Before we reached the town we captured the videttes on the pike upon which we were moving; also captured General Crittenden in his bed at his headquarters, a nice dwelling in the town, and learned from the citizens that the enemy had an encampment of eight hundred or one thousand infantry soldiers in the suburbs of the town, about the same number and artillery out on Stone River a mile away, and a strong guard over about 150 political or citizen prisoners at the court house.

Colonel Forrest divided his command into three divisions, sending one to attack the court house, one to attack the enemy on Stone River, each division led by a few rangers, and the balance of the rangers to attack the encampment in the edge of Tennessee. The first two bodies mentioned did little except to draw the fire of the enemy and to warn them to be ready for us in later attacks. The rangers went into the encampment with a yell and attacked the enemy as they came out of the tents in their night clothes and after a lively skirmish in which many of them fell, our Colonel Wharton was wounded and ordered the regiment to withdraw.

Afterwards Colonel Forrest collected all of our regiment behind a block of buildings near the encampment, sent in a flag of truce demanding unconditional surrender of the encampment within thirty minutes and added, "If you refuse I will charge you with the Texas Rangers under the black flag." After a little delay

¹²July 12, 1862. The fight was on Sunday, July 13.—C. W. R.

they agreed to surrender and immediately Colonel Forrest sent flags of truce to other places where the troops were with the same demand and same threat and added, "I have your General and all the balance of his command as prisoners in my hands." In a little while the whole of General Crittenden's army were our prisoners with all their artillery, wagons, teams and army and soldiers' supplies and about 2000 soldiers. Forrest had played a bold game of bluff and it had succeeded where we could scarcely hope to conquer by force of arms; for our number was about half, and half of that number were fresh troops who had never been under fire of battle before.

An incident occurred as we made the charge along the streets in the twilight of that morning which was both inspiring and impressive. The ladies in their night robes came out on the pavement and cheered with their shouts and their "God bless you," even when the enemy's bullets were flying about them.

All army stores and artillery, small arms and ammunition were put under guard to take them back to McMinnville, about forty or fifty miles (I cannot remember exactly). The troops were collected and a guard of two companies and a commissioned officer were called for to take charge of them and march them back to McMinnville. Companies F and D of our regiment were detailed for this purpose and I was ordered to take charge of them and see to it that they were delivered to the place of rendezvous. I formed a column of prisoners, eight abreast and closed them up so as to allow only walking room between them, and put some guards in front on horseback, some in the rear, and the balance on each side; thus inclosing prisoners in hollow square and gave command to move forward. I gave instructions to the guards so the prisoners could hear, "If any man makes a break from that column, shoot him down without halting him." This was near sundown and we moved without difficulty but slowly on account of the long distance the prisoners had to walk; rushing them would have resulted in breaking them down.

My guards had had no sleep now for about forty hours nor rest either, so I soon found they were asleep on their horses, and fearing the enemy might discover it and make their escape I had to use heroic methods to meet the emergency. So I rode around that moving column all night punching or pinching the guards to keep

them awake. They would generally respond by "All right" or some sign as I waked them, but as soon as I passed they would fall asleep again so my march around that column continued on and on.

Just before daylight, I received order from Colonel Forrest to park my charge in a grass lot, put out videttes and let them rest an hour or so. So I readily obeyed instructions. By the time that I had placed the guards, the prisoners had all fallen on the ground and were asleep. My guards also fell asleep and I after strenuous efforts to keep up and look after the business in my hands, fell asleep also, my horse remaining by me. When daylight came I was the first to stir. I awaked the guards and then the prisoners, adopted the same formation I had before. We were soon on the march again with still about fifteen miles to travel.

We reached Forrest's headquarters about nine o'clock, turned over the prisoners to him, and asked him for the camp of the regiment. I dismissed the guard, went to camp, and found our captain and a few men with him. I dismounted, leaving my horse with the saddle and personal baggage on him for some one else to look after and fell down on the bare ground and slept until after sundown that evening without having had water or anything to eat for about twenty-four hours. The last I had was from the sutler's store the evening before. When I got up I found my horse dead only a few steps from where I left him. He had died from exhaustion. The two days and two nights constant going on the light feed he got were too much for him and he perished in the service of his country, so to speak.

I can think of nothing of much interest occurring to any portion of our regiment until General Bragg with the army of Tennessee made a raid into Kentucky in September, 1862, I think. The cavalry of course was to be the vanguard on this trip in order to clear up the way, and keep the commanding general posted as to what was before him on his line of march.

Our first engagement was with McCook's corps near the Kentucky-Tennessee line when our regiment was ordered to feel of the enemy in that section to ascertain its strength and size of force. This resulted in several casualties to our men and in finding it was McCook's corps marching north to be ready for General Bragg when he should get there. S. G. Clark of our company was one of the killed here. I kept a diary of the trip through Kentucky

on this raid and while I lost it soon after the raid was over I remember some of the entries made. One was that from the day we entered Kentucky until the day we passed out of the state, thirty-eight days, our regiment in part or as a whole had been under the fire of the enemy's guns forty-two times, including Perryville Battle as one of the times. Fighting and skirmishing occurred every day and some days more than once.¹³ Except at Perryville our losses were generally light, but coming so frequently they amounted to many in the aggregate.

Before I leave Perryville in my narrative I shall relate incidents on that field not to be easily forgotten. My bedfellow during the trip was D. A. McGenagil. At Perryville, a piece of shell bursting in our line of battle struck him in the side, breaking two of his ribs. He was sent off to the hospital for repairs so I was without a bedfellow that night, and as the nights were frosty I looked out for some other person to get the benefit of his blanket for a covering while mine should be spread on the ground for the pallet. We only had one blanket each, hence the necessity of having a partner. The battle had continued to rage until eight o'clock at night or thereabouts, the Confederates driving back their antagonists steadily until the firing ceased. Our regiment was required to go on picket along the space where the last fighting was done. It was in a corn field near a little branch. The Federals had withdrawn but a short distance without noise, and without fires had retired after putting out their pickets on the side next to us. We were instructed to go to the place to be picketed with great caution and keep silent. We found the place we stopped on and had to stay that night on ground covered with flint rocks from the size of a man's fist to the size of his head and many dead of both armies lying around. The wounded had been removed, or most of them. I looked around or searched around among my company; we only had a poor star light, as it was mostly cloudy. I found Sam Woodward of my company with a good blanket and no bedfellow for the night, and we soon arranged to bunk together. I said, "Sam, you look for a place as smooth as you can find, as clear of the flint rock as possible, and let me know and we will fix for bed." In

¹³The report of Gen. Jos. Wheeler of the cavalry operations in Kentucky is found in *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. XVI, part 1, pp. 893-900. Wharton's report is not found.—C. W. R.

fifteen or twenty minutes he came to me and said, "I have found a fairly good place, but there are two dead men on it." I said, "They are as dead as they will ever be, are they not?" He said, "Yes," and I said, "Then we will remove them a little space and occupy their place." He said, "All right," and we went to the spot selected and turned one man over one way and the other the other way (they were lying parallel with each other), made our bed between them and slept sweetly until daylight next morning; and behold one of the dead was a Confederate and other one a Federal soldier. Both had fallen on the same spot and died near each other.

Some of our boys, nearly barefooted, were searching around among the dead for footwear, all in the darkness. They had to judge of what they were getting by the way it felt. Mullins of Company D found a good pair of boots on Wheeler, I think, another ranger who was asleep among the dead. He immediately decided the boots would suit, grabbed one of them, and jerked it off Wheeler's foot. This aroused Wheeler to consciousness and he called out, "What in the h-ll are you doing there?" "Nothing, d—n you, I thought you were dead and I needed those boots." John P. Humphries, of whom I have spoken before, needed footwear and went out after daylight to see what were the chances. He found a Yankee, dead, sitting against a tree, with a good pair of shoes. John got down on his knees to take off the fellow's shoes and, just as he got one unlaced and ready to pull off, took another glance at the Yankee's face and the Yankee winked at him. He left the shoes on his dead man and came to camp and told it, and laughing that peculiar laugh, said he didn't want any shoes anyway.

Next morning our army moved to Harrodsburg, Kentucky, and the other army stayed near where they had camped before, not seeming to want to follow us, except at a considerable distance from us.

One other incident of the Perryville Battle I will mention. There were two young men, about eighteen and twenty years old, brothers, named George and Simeon Bruce who came to Texas to live, from Vermont, about eight months before the commencement of hostilities. They had no relatives or interests in Texas, but when the war came up they volunteered in our regiment, saying the South was right in its contentions, and they freely offered their

lives in its defense. At Perryville Simeon Bruce was shot through the calf of his leg with a grapeshot and George was left with him to care for him. They communicated with homefolks in Vermont and told of their whereabouts and conditions. An answer soon came back with money for every need and urging their return home. They were informed, also, that one of their brothers was a colonel in the Federal army and another one a surgeon in the same army. The family where they were staying also urged them to go home when they learned the facts concerning them. The boys didn't entirely consent to return, but said they would give it favorable consideration, not fully committing themselves to any certain course, but rather left the impression when Sim recovered they might go home. Sim after a long time got so he could ride horseback without much discomfort and then the boys bought horses with the money sent them and hastened South to their command and remained with it, making splendid soldiers until the war ended and returned to Texas and are there or in Oklahoma yet, or were when I last heard from them. When they returned to us I said, "I love my country and have offered my life in her defense, but I believe you Bruce boys are truer patriots than I am." As to the losses in this battle, I cannot recall. It was quite sanguinary and losses were heavy on both sides.

After the battle of Perryville the Confederate army moved towards Cumberland Gap in eastern Kentucky. The Federal army followed at a safe distance; our cavalry was rearguard to the Confederates. Skirmishes light and heavy with the enemy's advancing column was our daily pastime, sometimes twice or three times a day. Rations became scarcer day by day as we traversed the poor mountainous regions of eastern Kentucky. The people in there were generally poor with small patches in cultivation and few live stock, and all they had to live on had been consumed by the infantry which preceded us; so it must be clear to the reader that the cavalry suffered for want of food supplies. They were kept too busy to make excursions off the line of march to get food so they fasted and fought for days without anything worth mentioning. I saw men trimming beef bones left by the infantry, where they had killed the beeves and issued the meat to the men, thus getting a little of the stringy leaders off of them. Then they would break them and get the marrow inside. I saw a number of

men, of whom I was one, pick out the scattered grains of corn tramped in the ground by some infantry officer's horse where he had been fed a day or two ahead of us, and eat them with a relish, thus proving the adage that hunger is a good appetizer.

One day we were fighting a large force of the enemy's infantry and our Colonel thinking we would not be able to check them sent to our infantry for help. A brigade of our men came back to our assistance, and General B. F. Cheatham came with them, but they reached us after we had driven the enemy back and didn't need their help. General Cheatham had eight or ten ears of corn tied on his saddle behind him to feed his horse. A hungry Texan spied him and said, "Old man (addressing Cheatham), I will give you a dollar apiece for those ears of corn." The general with a haughty, dignified look said, "Do you know whom you are talking to?" The soldier said "No, and I don't care a damn, but I will do what I said I would about that corn." The general smiled, untied his corn, and threw it to the hungry men who scuffled over it as very hungry hogs would have done.

In a few more days we passed out of Kentucky through Cumberland Gap, moved on to Knoxville, Tennessee, and camped a few days to rest. The first night we were at Knoxville it snowed all night and next morning the ground and the army was covered with a three inch snow. We had no tents or covering of any kind, but our sleep was sound and restful. The leaves were still green on the trees and the contrast in colors between the leaves and the snow was quite impressive, and very unusual. This was in October, 1862, if my memory serves me correctly.

From Knoxville the army moved to middle Tennessee. Our regiment was camped at Nolensville, about fifteen or twenty miles south of Nashville. Our duty was to watch the movements of the Yankee army now assembling at Nashville and to keep our general posted about them. We remained at this point until Christmas Day. Some of the boys were preparing to have an egg-nog for Christmas when suddenly our pickets were driven in and reported a large force of infantry and artillery moving upon us. The regiment was mounted at once to meet this advance. As soon as we came in full view of the enemy they opened fire with artillery, four guns throwing what seemed to be about six pound shells. I was in command of Company F that day, the captain

being on the sick list but still in camp. As we moved in columns of twos in front of the enemy their shells got our range pretty quickly. One shell burst in rear of my company doing slight damage, another one entered the body of a horse near my horse's head, bursting inside the horse and knocked my horse to his knees and covering him and me with blood and flesh from the other horse. Strange to say the trooper riding this torn up horse escaped without the slightest injury. His name was Glasscow of Company C; he was riding in the rear of his company in front of me. A few steps further another shell passed between my horse's head and the rear of another horse ridden by Lieutenant Black, cutting down a cedar tree as large as a man's leg, just on the left of us. We moved further to the left out of range of this artillery, dismounted, formed a line and moved out towards, or to the left of this battery somewhat; but before we made the attack a flanking command was discovered moving to our rear on the right and we returned to our horses and rode over to the right of the first alignment to meet this flank movement and while engaging these with a furious fire another force equally strong was approaching from the front and we had to retire for a new alignment.

Colonel Harrison, passing by me as we had begun to retire before the enemy, said, "Form your company on this rise and hold the position while I form the regiment behind you in supporting distance." I called on my men to fall into line, but they had turned towards the rear and the heavy firing of the enemy from two points made it almost impossible for men or horses to get their consent to face the other way and stand still; so I urged and I ordered with all the vehemence I possessed, sometimes getting as many as two or three to face about and make a temporary halt and then move on. Finally Gabe Beaumont of Company A, who had fallen behind his company in the different movements, seeing my trouble said to me "Lieutenant, I will stand; form your company on me." He took his stand, I rushed my men in line with him, and having got my men in line was riding up and down the line encouraging all I could to stay there. The enemy's bullets were flying uncomfortably thick. I heard a ball strike when near Beaumont and saw his gun fall, but he stood perfectly still until I approached him. I asked Gabe, "Are you badly

hurt?" He said, "I think I am." I said, "I will excuse you now. You can retire and my men will stay here without you." So I sent him off with a man to help him if he needed help. This ball shattered his left arm just below the shoulder joint and had to be taken off at the shoulder to save his life. He was shot out of service, but he demonstrated to his comrades in arms what true bravery could accomplish. I met this brave hero many years after in Coleman, Texas. He had studied medicine after the war and made a success in that profession. A while after Beaumont was sent to the rear, the Colonel sent me word to withdraw my company and fall back to my position. This ended the fighting for the day, and that night, after viewing the enemy's encampments with Company F, trying as best I could to make an estimate of their numbers and reporting the same to the Colonel, we rested.

The regiment moved to Murfreesboro where two armies were rapidly gathering for one of the great battles of the Civil War. Just whether we moved that night, or fell back gradually as the enemy advanced to Murfreesboro I cannot now recall, but on the first day of January, 1863, brigade skirmish line was formed from our brigade and I was ordered to take charge of this line. The men were placed in line ten feet apart on foot in one side of an old field grown up in long weeds about as high as a man's head. The enemy were in the other side of the same field. Our skirmishers were armed with rifles or muskets for the occasion. I was told to keep the men to their places so there would be no weak spot and no bunching of our men on the line, to keep them firing continually, etc., etc. As I rode along that long line of men—I was the only man on horseback in that line—I saw that Bill Simpson of Company F was about two feet, or three feet at the most, from a high poplar stump in line with the men, so I said, "Bill, take the stump. There it is but a little ways from your place and it may save your life or your limbs." He looked up at me and said, "I thank you, I am doing very well here," and refused to use it. These two lines of skirmishers were in what was afterward known as the left flank of our army during the battle and as far as I am able to tell now this was the beginning of that great battle.

We were relieved after a while by some infantry and we re-

mounted our horses to meet some Yankee cavalry that came in on our left. We charged them, drove them, and scattered them. As we returned from pursuing them my horse slipped and fell, throwing me on the horn of my saddle and producing a case of nearly strangulated hernia from a slight rupture I had had before. This fall laid me up for several days and took me off the battlefield until the battle ended and longer. Whatever else I relate of this battle or as to what happened in or to the regiment must be from hearsay and not from personal observation. The regiment was engaged all the time, sometimes in the flank, sometimes in the rear of the enemy; sometimes fighting infantry, sometimes cavalry; capturing many of the enemy and destroying much of his supplies.

One or two incidents I wish to relate happened during that conflict. A Yankee General fell into the hands of the Rangers. They asked him his name and rank. He said, "General Willich." "The same who commanded the 32nd Indiana Infantry as Colonel?" he was asked. "Yes the same, and who are you," demanded the General. "Terry Texas Rangers" was the reply. "Mein Gott," said General Willich, "I had rather be a private in that regiment than to be a Brigadier General in the Federal army." Willich had met the boys at Woodsonville, Ky., as Colonel of the 32nd Indiana regiment and had met them at Murfreesboro as Brigadier General and had lost out both times and was qualified to judge of their military prowess. General Willich was Dutch or German, with a foreign accent.

Colonel Harrison by this time had so long escaped personal injury from shot and shell, his men dubbed him "Old Iron Sides," because as they said he was sheathed with iron and no bullet could penetrate his body. On the second day of this battle, Billy Sayers, his Adjutant, sat on his horse beside him under a heavy fire. Colonel Harrison leaned over to Sayers and whispered, "I am wounded, but don't say anything about it on account of the men." Billy wanted him off the field, but he refused to go. It proved to be a flesh wound in the hip, not very serious, and he stayed with and commanded the regiment throughout the battle. On another occasion the Colonel, while standing in front of his line ready to make or receive a charge as it might happen, was looking through his field glass at a body of cavalry some distance

off. Suddenly he exclaimed, "Now boys, we will have some fun. There is a regiment out there preparing to charge us, armed with sabres. Let them come up nearly close enough to strike and then feed them on buckshot." So they came up with great noise and pretense, hoping to demoralize and scatter their opponents and then have a race in which they could use their sabres effectively. But as the Texans stood their ground the Yankees ran up to within a few steps and halted suddenly, giving our boys the chance they were wishing for. One volley from the shotguns into their ranks scattered these sabre men into useless fragments of a force. Many of them surrendered and our boys quizzed them with merciless questions. "Why did you stop?" "Are your sabres long ranged weapons?" "How far can you kill a man with those things?" After a conflict lasting two days with varying success and defeat for both armies, the Southern army withdrew to the south, leaving the other army with fresh reinforcements encamped not far from the last lines of battle the evening before.

The weather had turned fearfully cold and the earth would freeze very hard at night. About the first night after we left Murfreesboro Jim Stevenson, coming off of duty late, came to the log heap fire of my mess, and asked permission to sleep near our fire. Jim was a shiftless boy whose dress was weather worn and untidy, his body generally dirty and infected with what the boys called "graybacks." So no one would sleep with him and he didn't expect any one to divide bedding with him. We granted his request and he made his pallet down a little space from the rest of us and went to sleep. Next morning he slept on after daylight. I went to see how he was faring and to awake him if still living. I caught his top blanket at his head and raised it up and as it was set and frozen it stood up on the other end like a dried raw hide would do with like handling. I said, "Get up my boy, don't try to sleep all day. How did you sleep?" He replied, "Bully," that he had two blankets last night. He had an old thread bare blanket under him and a heavy army blanket he had captured from the enemy during the battle just fought. He had slept all night without moving, as evidenced by an unfrozen streak, just the shape of his body on that blanket where he had lain on his side; the rest of that blanket being frozen stiff

as a board. Jim could suffer hardships without a murmur, and although he was shiftless and loved to play poker he could always be depended upon when there was any fighting to be done. He was a brave man and a good soldier.

(Continued in October.)